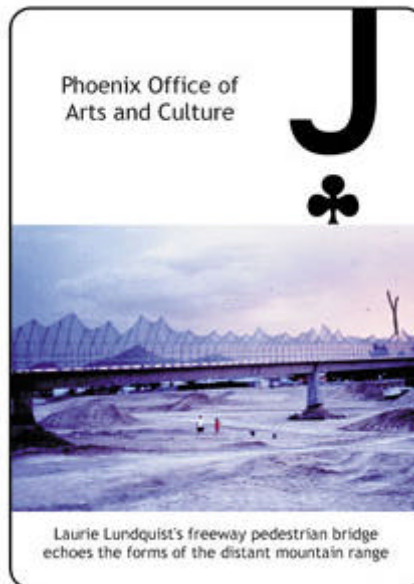


Arizona Commission on the Arts State and Local Partnerships



What is a Local Arts Agency?



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State and Local Partnerships

The Arizona Commission on the Arts is funded by the State of Arizona and the National Endowment for the Arts. These federal and state dollars are catalytic to private funding; they strengthen the partnerships between the public and private sectors in support of the arts.

The State and Local Partnerships Division works with state, regional, and local entities to conceptualize, research, design and implement programs for organizations and individuals that have a long-term impact in underserved, urban, rural and emerging communities; and to develop programs and resources that impact the work of the local arts agencies around the state. The Division manages the Commission's cultural tourism, economic development, and international initiatives.

Contact

Arizona Commission on the Arts

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About the Program

Local Arts Agencies

A local arts agency (LAA) is a private community organization or local government agency that supports cultural organizations, provides services to artists or arts organizations, and/or presents arts programming to the public. LAAs endeavor to make the arts part of the daily fabric of community living. Each LAA is unique to the community that it serves, and each changes as fast as its community changes. However, all seek to serve the diverse art forms in their community and make them accessible to every community member.

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What is a Local Arts Agency?

Introduction

What is a local arts agency (LAA)? What does it do? Why are LAAs known by many different names, such as arts councils, arts commissions, arts centers, etc.? What is the distinction between a public and a private LAA? How are LAAs formed? In short, what is a LAA all about?

These and many other questions are often asked of Americans for the Arts (the nation's arts information clearinghouse focusing on arts industry research, arts advocacy and representing local communities by creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts.) The answers are complex and sometimes seemingly confusing, as no two LAAs seem to be alike. They are, and should be, each uniquely designed to meet the needs of the community they serve. It is important, however, for those involved, or wishing to get involved, to have succinct, understandable and readily available answers to these questions.

The following information is designed to provide significant yet broad answers to the most frequently asked questions concerning the objectives, structures and activities of LAAs, as well as to help explain the LAAs role in community life. This is written with the intent of being a "first-stop" resource tool for arts administrators dealing with the general public, the press, politicians etc., as well as a primer for those interested in founding a Local Arts Agency.

What is an LAA?

The Americans for the Arts defines a LAA as: "A private community organization or local government agency that supports cultural organizations, provides services to artists or arts organizations, and/or presents arts programming to their community."

Simply put, a LAA is a nonprofit or government entity, that is created to meet the cultural needs of a community and to foster an environment in which artists and arts organizations can flourish.

A LAA represents all of the arts disciplines and frequently acts as a central clearinghouse for the cultural scene of a community. A LAA may provide services, coordinate, present and run programs, fundraise, administer and distribute grants, educate, stimulate, and nurture the cultural life of the community.

LAAs can serve populations of all sizes, and are located in urban, rural and suburban areas. They can focus on one activity or dozens of activities, based on the needs and desires of the community. LAAs can represent a single jurisdiction, such as a city, town or county, or multiple jurisdictions, such as a metropolitan or tri-state area. Or, they may represent smaller areas, such as a neighborhood within a city or county.

What is a Local Arts Agency?

Other combinations are also possible: several larger cities in the United States have two LAAs. In such instances, the agencies usually have a separate focus but work cooperatively with each other.

LAAs also work with many other entities within a community, such as libraries, schools, businesses, tourism offices, and governmental divisions concerned with such functions as city planning, public art, parks and recreation. LAAs often assume the lead role in coordinating community-wide networks and activities and promote a strong sense of civic pride.

Because it represents the community as a whole, a LAA is nonpartisan. Its supporters reflect the diversity of the population it serves – people of all ages, ethnic and racial backgrounds and ‘special interest’ groups, such as people with disabilities and older individuals. There are an estimated 3,000 LAAs in the United States, each of which is helping to enrich the lives of its constituency.

What does an LAA do?

Not an easy question to answer, for while there are many common programs and services within the field, no two LAAs carry out precisely the same functions. What a LAA does is based on the needs and desires of the people it serves, available financial resources and the other arts support systems and cultural activities existing in the community.

In a broad sense, LAAs serve as a unified voice for the arts community and as a vehicle for educating the general public about the value and significance of the arts. LAAs place special emphasis on the important role the arts play in the economic vitality of communities, a healthy cultural ‘scene’ and a healthy economy frequently go hand-in-hand!

LAA activities commonly fall into three areas: programming, services and grantsmanship. Most LAAs combine and carry out activities in all three areas and also engage in some advocacy work.

LAAs can provide tangible services such as printed arts calendars, central ticket offices, insurance and group purchasing/equipment loan plans, cultural libraries, employment referral services, directories and newsletters, administrative management services and training opportunities. They can produce and operate programs such as festivals, exhibitions, ‘art in public places’ projects, touring programs, and educational programming in the schools and elsewhere. Many LAAs also do fundraising (grantsmanship), which can involve administering united arts fundraising campaigns, obtaining grants and offering fellowships to artists. Still other LAAs operate cultural facilities and integrate involvement with community-wide planning, urban design and redevelopment into their programming or services.

A checklist follows, of possible LAA activities. This list is not intended to be comprehensive; rather, it is an organized listing of the more common activities of LAAs. The spectrum of possible activity is only limited by the imagination, ingenuity and dedication of the leadership of the LAA and the community as a whole.

Check List for LAA Activities

Information Services

- arts calendar/scheduling clearinghouse
- community cultural resource library
- artist/organization directories
- newsletter/publications
- promotion/publicity for media
- advocacy

Organization Services

- central box office/ticket vouchers
- central accounting
- block booking of performance/exhibits
- central purchasing/equipment loan
- group insurance
- volunteer recruitment and training
- marketing services and research
- central administrative management for artists/organizations
- volunteer professional referrals (lawyers, accountants, etc.)
- advocacy services

Programming

- discipline specific classes/lectures
- art competitions and exhibitions
- festivals (ethnic, film, multi-arts, etc.)
- artists showcases
- art/artists in public places
- percent for art programs
- arts education – residencies, curriculum development, workshop/classes
- neighborhood outreach programs
- cooperative events programming
- awards programming
- urban design/rehabilitation
- community planning
- cable/local TV programming
- new art forms/emerging artist programs
- corporate art purchase programs

Artist Services

- artist employment/referrals
- artist registry and artist roster
- exhibition/performance referrals
- studio/living space referrals
- business management assistance

Facilities Operation

- meeting/rehearsal/classroom space
- sales/rental facility
- performance facility
- exhibition facility

Technical Assistance

- workshops
- seminars
- management/admin. assistance
- grant proposal assistance
- consulting

Grantsmanship

- project support
- individual artist projects
- public art

**This is a sample list only*

LAA Names and Structures

What's in a name?

Why is it that LAAs are referred to by any number of names, such as arts commissions, arts councils, arts centers, arts associations, arts leagues, municipal arts agencies, arts departments, office of cultural affairs, united arts funds, arts extension services, etc? The Americans for the Arts' definition of a LAA: "A private community organization or local government agency that supports cultural organizations, provides services to artists or arts organizations, and/or presents arts programming to their community." encompasses all of these. It requires only that an agency provide financial support, services and/or other programs for a variety of arts organizations and/or artists and the community as a whole.

Beyond the different names, LAAs are also distinguished by their status as public or private bodies. They may be either a public entity within a larger government structure or they may be a private organization, usually 501 (c) (3) federally tax-exempt. Quasi-private or public groups are also possible. Whatever their status, public and private LAAs are all nonprofit groups, structured and governed by the given federal, state and local rules and regulations.

Local Arts Agencies

PUBLIC

Entity within government structure, governed by any number of possible channels.

Not-for-profit or Governmental

PRIVATE

Private corporation, governed by a private board of directors/memberships.

Not-for-profit

Focus, Mission and Activities should be the same for both public and private LAAs as determined by the needs and desires of the community, and carried out according to and by the given governing authority/structure/mandates.

Private Local Arts Agencies

A private, nonprofit arts organization, arts center, arts association or, as is most common, an arts council, is incorporated by a state authority and governed by a board of directors comprising private citizens elected by the corporate membership.

The group must comply with all of the state and federal rules and regulations associated with tax exemption (usually 501 (c) (3) status), have written bylaws and statement of purpose, and hold annual meetings of the membership. It is important to note that every state has a different set of rules and regulations governing corporations which private LAAs must follow.

A united arts fund (UFA) is an example of one kind of private LAA. It has a very specific mission: as a united voice, to generate and distribute funds for arts groups within a community. Its activities may include: advocacy, benefit gala events, auctions, direct mail solicitation, standard corporate and foundation fundraising or workplace contributions (i.e: United Way)

Another example of a private LAA is an "arts council." The council may have a mission to provide a variety of services to the artists, arts organizations, and the community as a whole. Its activities may include:

- administering the city/county percent-for-arts program
- coordinating and sponsoring exhibitions
- managing rehearsal and performance space
- producing an arts calendar and newsletter
- providing professional management and training opportunities to individual
- artists and arts groups

Private arts organizations are funded in a variety of ways, usually including a mixture of individual and business donations, membership dues, earned-income activities, and grants from local, state and federal government.

In an Americans for the Arts' membership profile, there are 4,000 LAA in the United States, an estimated 75% of which are private, nonprofit organizations; leaving 25% as public agencies (city or county.) The budgets of these 4,000 LAAs range from \$600 to \$116,700,000 and 1,200 LAAs have paid staff. 61% provide direct funding to artists or arts organizations in their community. 53% provide general operating support to arts organizations and sixty-six percent of LAAs implement arts education programs. Nearly all LAAs (91%) collaborate through community partnerships with other arts organizations, other government agencies or community/service organizations.

Public Local Arts Agencies

Public arts agencies are more diverse in their structures. While private arts agencies must be formed according to standard rules, public arts agencies are governed by different standards. As a result, public arts agencies have sprouted within governmental structures in every shape and form.

The two most common type of public LAAs are arts commissions and offices/departments of cultural affairs. However, in some jurisdictions, (the closest thing to a LAA) may be a recreation department, public library or local college.

Arts Commissions

Arts Commissions are usually created either through an initiative of the executive branch of local government or by an act of legislation such as an ordinance. In either case, the commission's members are drawn from the community at large and usually consist of representatives from business, labor, the arts, minority groups, etc. Commissions act similarly to the board of directors for private LAAs, but they do not necessarily have the authority to govern themselves. For example, they may serve as an advisory body to the mayor or county commissioner, or they may be established as an independent municipal agency, with separate funding and staff. There are also many other possible variations in the ways commissions are granted authority and funding.

Offices/Departments of Cultural Affairs

This type of public arts organization is usually initiated by the executive branch of local government, not by legislation, and acts on behalf of the mayor or county commissioner. The staff usually carries out the arts programs and policies established by the mayor, the mayor's "advisory commission", etc. The organization may be funded as an independent city agency or as a part of the mayor's or commissioner's budget. It is also possible that the organization may initially be funded as a "line item" within a mayor's or commissioner's budget and later evolve into an independent city agency.

No matter how they are integrated into the structure of the local government, public agencies are primarily funded through general city/county treasury funds (i.e. taxes). Specific taxes such as hotel/motel tax or special district tax may be earmarked for arts activities. An independent public arts agency (with its own "line item" in the city or county budget) may work on a cooperative project with other city departments (for example, on a project involving historic preservation, city planning, employment, etc.) In such a case, the arts agency may receive additional funding through the budgets of these other departments. Other sources of revenue for public arts agencies include state and federal funding and support from the private sector.

Joint Ventures

Public and private LAAs can form effective partnerships

A private arts council may advise a municipal arts commission, though the responsibilities of the two are kept separate. In communities where both public and private LAAs exist, frequently one focuses on services and the other on programs. Ideally, the two cooperate with and complement each other. A private LAA can also be designated as the official arts council of the city without necessarily being funded by the local government. In this kind of relationship, a private LAA is referred to as having been "officially designated" by the local government to act on its behalf. Frequently, this occurs if the jurisdiction does not have a public arts agency; if specific arts programs or activities prove too cumbersome for the jurisdiction to handle; or if it is felt that the private LAA is better situated politically to administer the needed programs and activities.

Starting a Local Arts Agency

General Steps for Private Local Arts Agencies

Advance Preparation Work

Determine what is required legally and order appropriate federal and State information kits.

Familiarize yourself with the materials and engage the services of an attorney.

Establish formation committee to develop/draft the following: organizational structure; mission statement; goals, objectives and strategies; two year plan, funding objectives and possible resources and job descriptions for board and staff and personnel policies.

Form bylaws committee to draft/write bylaws, through the Corporation Commission.

File for federal tax-exempt status.

Get federal tax identification number.

Check with the Office of the Secretary of State for possible required filing.

Request state sales tax exemption.

Obtain board and staff liability insurance.

In all instances, groups should seek legal assistance throughout these various steps.

Starting a Local Arts Agency

General Steps for Public Local Arts Agencies

Individuals cannot establish a public LAA. Public LAAs or governmental mechanisms for support of cultural activities must be established by a mayor, county commissioner, city council, etc. However, individuals and concerned groups do have cultural votes, however and can, by public demand, approach a local government about starting a public LAA.

Most frequently, a mayor or county commissioner will do one of two things:

1. Create an office or establish a program in another department or agency by executive decree/authority
2. Appoint an ad hoc committee to conduct a Community Assessment/Inventory and develop/draft an ordinance, which, will be presented to and passed by a city council. The latter will usually involve a broad-based cross section of citizens and is the strongest action a local government can take in support of the cultural community. This is a service that the Arizona Commission on the Arts is able to provide, it is called a Community Cultural Inventory.

Listed below are some ideas and possible points for cultural support groups to consider when initiating public support for the arts:

Do your homework

- Find out how a city supports the arts.
- Determine the cultural political climate.
- Examine all local government departments.
- Identify the proper channels for focusing efforts and plans.
- Review what and how facilities are used.
- Pinpoint monies that are used or could be used.
- Look for people who support the arts and who are sympathetic to the significance of community-wide cultural awareness and involvement.
- Attend meetings. Listen to what is being said and by whom.
- Approach the mayor or governing body of officials.
- Find out the communities priorities and interest in the arts and cultural life of the community.

Gather forces

- Educate the officials of local government and heighten the public's awareness to the cultural needs, benefits and spectrum of possibilities
- Increase the level of the public's involvement with every aspect of existing or potentially existing activities/ programs
- Create a strong and broad-based support system of people
- Acknowledge those that have helped your efforts and have aided the cultural community in the past
- Lobby and work towards the development and passing of a city ordinance or the establishment of an official mechanism/office for public cultural support

Obtaining a Tax Exempt Status

This is only an informational document to give you an idea of the steps required. Please note these may not be all of the steps required to obtain tax exempt status for your organization. This is only a checklist, the legal process changes all the time. You are strongly encouraged to obtain professional assistance from a lawyer or other organization to help you with this process.

1. Create the organizational by-laws for your organization.
2. File IRS Form SS-4. This is to obtain your federal Employer Identification Number. You need this number for all the other forms you need to complete.
Helpful hint: Check with the Corporation Commission to determine if the name of your organization has already been used or can become your legal name (\$10 fee to register name.)
3. Obtain IRS Publication 557. This publication discusses the rules and procedures for applying for your Tax Exempt Status (501) (c) (3).
4. File *Articles of Incorporation* with the Corporation Commission. This process requires a filing fee , plus publication of your articles in the local paper for two consecutive dates, for fee. Check with the Corporation Commission to determine other requirements. This process can take time, as there are certain restrictions imposed by the Corporation Commission.
5. Obtain and complete IRS Application Package 1023 for filing forms 1023 and 872-C. Directions are in this package to complete these forms.
6. Obtain IRS Form 8718. Complete this form and file it with your 1023 application package. This form is for requesting a determination letter. It will also give you the required fee to be paid and where the forms need to be filed (The cost is around \$500).
7. Wait for a response from the IRS. You will either have to provide more information to make sure they understand what type of organization you are. or you will receive an advanced ruling from them, which gives you temporary status as a Tax Exempt organization and allows you to do business as a 501(c)3 organization.

Your organization will have to wait three years and do business under the advanced ruling, prior to obtaining a complete ruling from the IRS.

LAAs as Advocates

TWO MINUTES.

**That's all it takes to tell
Congress you support the
Arts and Arts Education.**

-Americans for the Arts

Local Arts Agencies act as the champion of arts advocacy in their communities. Through programming, public information and other outreach activities, LAAs can voice the opinion of arts policy, arts education and quality of life issues to their civic leaders.

Here is information and facts provided by Arizona Citizens/Action for the Arts as LAAs advocate the arts on a local, statewide and national level.

KEY MESSAGES

A STRONG BUSINESS SECTOR INCLUDES THE CREATIVE SECTOR

- * 9,369 arts-related businesses provide 42,273 jobs in the state of Arizona
- * Tucson's major arts organizations spent over \$39.5 million and generated \$5.8 million in tax revenues in FY 99-2000
- * Nonprofit Maricopa County arts organizations and their audiences had a total economic impact of nearly \$344 million in FY 2000.

CULTURAL TOURISM BRINGS SIGNIFICANT DOLLARS TO ARIZONA

- * The Sedona Jazz on the Rocks Festival attracts 7,500 fans from across the U.S. and abroad annually.
- * The Celebration of Basketweaving saw approximately \$125,000 in revenue toward Native American artists through the sale of their artwork to tourists.
- * Non-local attendees to arts events spend nearly 3x as much as locals--\$40 on average above the cost of admission.

THE ARTS PREPARE THE THINKERS OF TOMORROW

- * Hispanic students participating in Tucson's Opening Minds Through the Arts narrow the achievement gap.
- * Arizona Commission on the Arts-sponsored activities and programs reach nearly 2 million students.
- * Students who are highly involved in arts instruction:

Earn better grades

Perform better on standardized tests

Perform more community service

Watch fewer hours of television

Report less boredom in school

LAAs as Advocates

ADVOCACY TIPS

Communicating with your Legislator

- Introduce yourself & give him/her your contact info to keep in touch.
- If you are a constituent, say so!
- Keep in touch year-round on any issues important to you—not just the arts.
- Identify bills by number & tell personal stories.
- State your position clearly and express the action you want the legislator to take.

The Etiquette of Advocacy

- Use the “catch more flies with honey” approach.
- Call for an appointment—don't just drop in.
- Focus on a single issue at a time.
- Listen to your legislator's interests and find a way to connect them with the arts.
- Practice the golden rule—don't be angry or argumentative.
- Thank them for their attention to your concern.
- Share your experiences with Arizona Citizens/Action for the Arts.

Helpful Websites

- Track legislative bills--www.azleg.gov
- Arizona Citizens/Action for the Arts — www.azcitizensforthearts.org
- Arizona Commission on the Arts--www.azarts.gov
- Arizona Alliance for Arts Education—www.artsed.org
- Arizona Capitol Times-- www.arizonacapitoltimes.com
- Arizona Secretary of State's Office-- www.azsos.gov
- Americans for the Arts--www.artsusa.org

Local Arts Agencies in Arizona

Ajo Council for the Fine Arts
Pima County
bobjun@tabletoptelephone.com

Arts Alliance of the White Mountains
Navajo County
Info@aawmaz.com
www.aawmaz.com

Arts Council of the North Valley
Maricopa County
Donnakublin@aol.com
www.acnv.org

Avondale Arts Commission
Maricopa County
rhill@avondale.org
www.avondale.org/index.asp?NID=595

Benson Arts Commission
Cochise County
silverbelle@mac.com

Bisbee Arts Commission
Cochise County
mgreene@cityofbisbee.com
www.cityofbisbee.com/ac.html
www.discoverbisbee.com

Bullhead City Municipal Arts Commission
Mohave County
cspotts@bullheadcity.com
www.bullheadcity.com/commissions/arts/index.asp

Casa Grande Arts and Humanities Commission
Pinal County
gleija@ci.casa-grande.az.us
www.ci.casa-grande.az.us/clerk/boards/arts_human/boards_arts_human.php

Chandler Arts Commission
Maricopa County
eric.faulhaber@chandleraz.gov
www.visiongallery.org

Chandler Cultural Foundation
Maricopa County
katrina.mueller@chandleraz.gov
www.chandlercenter.org

Cobre Valley Arts Center
Gila County
cvca@theriver.com

City of Coolidge, Community Services
Pinal County
nicolez@coolidgeaz.com
www.coolidgeaz.com/index.asp?NID=87

Cultural Council of Yuma
Yuma County
culturalcouncil@mindspring.com
www.ccyuma.org

Flagstaff Cultural Partners
Coconino County
itannous@culturalpartners.org
www.culturalpartners.org

Fountain Hills Cultural Council
Maricopa County
sandinorm@cox.net
www.fountainhillsculturalcouncil.org

Gila Valley Arts Council
Gila County
gilavalley_artsCouncil@yahoo.com
www.qvac.org

Gilbert Arts Advisory Board
Maricopa County
kimberlyg@ci.gilbert.az.us
www.ci.gilbert.az.us/arts/default.cfm

Glendale Library and Arts Department
Maricopa County
rgulbranson@glendaleaz.com
www.glendaleaz.com/arts

Gold Canyon Arts Council
Pinal County
gcacarts@juno.com
www.goldcanyonarts.org

Greater Oro Valley Arts Council
Pima County
govac@qwest.net
www.govac.org

Huachuca Art Association
Cochise County
rosariowilke@aol.com
www.huachuca-art.com

Kingman Cultural Arts Commission
Mohave County
dfruhwirth@ci.kingman.az.us
www.ci.kingman.az.us

Lake Havasu Allied Arts Council
Mohave County
ahall@mohave.edu

Marana Arts Council
Pima County
carmen@maranaarts.org
www.maranaarts.org

Mesa Arts and Culture Division
Maricopa County
Johan.Zietsman@cityofmesa.org
www.cityofmesa.org/arts

Peoria Arts Commission
Maricopa County
andre.licardi@peoriaaz.com
www.peoriaaz.com/arts

Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture
Maricopa County
phil.jones@phoenix.gov
www.phoenix.gov/arts

Pinal County Fine Arts Council
Pinal County
dreeder@cybertrails.com

Prescott Area Arts and Humanities Council
Yavapai County
echodesignz@msn.com
www.prescottarts.com

Prescott Valley Arts and Culture Commission
Yavapai County
bwitty@pvaz.net
www.pvaz.net/Government/boards/arts.htm

Scottsdale Cultural Council
Maricopa County
shelleyc@sccarts.org
www.sccarts.org

Sedona Arts and Culture Division
Yavapai County
gwolstencroft@sedonaaz.gov
www.sedonaaz.gov/egov/departments.aspx?dID=Arts%20&%20Culture

Sierra Vista Arts and Humanities Commission
Cochise County
jstartt@ci.sierra-vista.az.us
www.ci.sierra-vista.az.us/CityHall/Boards.htm#arts

Superstition Area Cultural Alliance
Pinal County
Info@superstitionareaculturalalliance.org
www.superstitionareaculturalalliance.org

Surprise Arts and Cultural Advisory Board
Maricopa County
sintra@surpriseaz.com
www.surpriseaz.com/index.asp?NID=473

Tempe Cultural Services
Maricopa County
jody_ulich@tempe.gov
www.tempe.gov/arts

Tucson Pima Arts Council
Pima County
rbedoya@tucsonpimaartscouncil.org
www.tucsonpimaartscouncil.org

West Valley Arts Council
Maricopa County
jrichard@westvalleyarts.org
www.westvalleyarts.org

Winslow Arts Commission
Coconino County
dlutzick@yahoo.com

Yuma Arts and Culture Commission
Yuma County
rex.ijams@yumaaz.gov
www.yumaaz.gov/parksandrec/artcenter.htm

Web Resources

Arizona Commission on the Arts

www.azarts.gov

National Endowment for the Arts

www.nea.gov

Americans for the Arts

www.artsusa.org

Arizona Corporation Commission

www.cc.state.az.us

Arizona Corporation Commission (Filing Forms for 501 (c) 3)

www.cc.state.az.us/corp/filings/forms/packets.htm

Arizona Citizens for the Arts

www.azcitizensforthearts.org

Listing of Local Arts Agencies in Arizona

www.azarts.gov/locals

Listing of Local Arts Agencies in the United States

<http://ww2.americansforthearts.org/vango/custom/directory.aspx>

Southwest Arts Conference

www.azarts.gov/SWAC

State of Arizona

www.az.gov

Notes

**This document is available in
alternative formats by contacting the
Arizona Commission on the Arts at 602-771-6501**